

Legislation would require Federal Government to fully fund No Child Left Behind before schools suffer penalties

Washington, D.C. -- Congresswoman Betty McCollum (MN-04) has reintroduced legislation to reform President Bush's controversial *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* education law. The S
Student Achievement and Successful Schools (SASS) Act (
[H.R. 1169](#)
) would ease unrealistic demands placed on schools by *NCLB* and require full federal funding of the law's mandates before schools can be sanctioned for failing to meet them.

Lawmakers should hold schools accountable for student success, but we must first hold ourselves accountable for funding and supporting their efforts, Congresswoman McCollum said. "The *Student Achievement and Successful Schools Act* will ensure that public schools meet high academic standards, but are not penalized by Washington's failure to fund its own mandates."

Originally passed in 2001, *No Child Left Behind* must be reauthorized by Congress this year. Unfortunately, the last six years have resulted in the White House and Congress underfunding *NCLB* programs by nearly \$55 billion. Meanwhile, the law's unfunded mandates have often undermined state and local goals. As a New York Times Editorial observed on Sunday, "...many states opted for dumbed-down tests and deliberate sleight of hand to create the fraudulent appearance of progress." States like Minnesota that maintained high standards have actually been harmed by the law.

The *SASS Act* will rectify many of these problems by:

- Providing performance bonuses for high achieving school districts;
- Allowing states and schools to defer sanctions if the federal government fails to adequately fund Title I and IDEA;
- Making common-sense changes to the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculations used to evaluate schools' improvement;
- Allowing states to use the "growth model" to measure student achievement over time rather than at a single point; and
- Requiring accountability from providers of Supplemental Education Services for

underachieving schools.

[Click here](#) for the full text of the bill.

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